



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Apostle Islands
National Lakeshore

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Apostle Islands News Release

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NPS Publishes Final Long-Term Plan for Apostle Islands

The National Park Service is pleased to announce the release of the *Final General Management Plan/Wilderness Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (GMP)* for Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. It is the culmination of a great deal of time, effort, energy, and input from members of the public; American Indian tribes; other federal, state, and local agencies and community members; and the National Park Service (NPS).

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore Superintendent Bob Krumenaker said, "We appreciate the public interest and involvement received over the course of this lengthy planning effort. The comments, questions, and input from people who care about this park shaped the final plan."

The GMP for the Apostle Islands includes a preferred alternative that has been vetted through extensive civic engagement over the past 6½ years. It is faithful to the intent of the National Lakeshore's 1970 enabling legislation and the subsequent addition of Long Island and the light stations in 1986, as well as the establishment by Congress of the Gaylord Nelson Wilderness in 2004. Having heard many times that the public doesn't want to see major changes to the Lakeshore, the GMP generally continues the current management direction with some minor changes to increase the opportunity for more people to have an island experience as well as to enhance the "gateway" experience on the mainland. It provides for strong natural and cultural resource protection of this very special national park

while at the same time providing for a diversity of appropriate recreational opportunities in and out of designated wilderness.

The GMP also provides specific management direction for a number of important issues that arose early in the planning process, including the future of the light stations, life estates and expired use and occupancy properties, visitor centers, and the park's operational and administrative facilities on the mainland.

"We will continue to do our best to provide excellent stewardship for this amazing 'collection of islands' that have been entrusted to our care," Krumenaker said. "We're grateful for the passion for this special place that was so evident during the many public meetings held during the planning process. We look forward to implementing this plan in the public interest with your support. As the life of this GMP is expected to be 15-20 years, we can expect budgets to ebb and flow during that period. The NPS will do our best to be true to the intent of the GMP, but it may be many years before some of the projects in the plan are funded and implemented."

Implementation of all major items will depend on future funding, and there will be further opportunities for public involvement in site-specific designs to refine the details while remaining consistent with the GMP direction.

The National Park Service will soon prepare and issue its "Record of Decision" (ROD) for this project, which will be published in the *Federal Register* and posted on the park's web site. The planning process will be complete upon publication of a smaller, more user-friendly version of the plan that focuses solely on the proposed actions and omits the alternatives that considered but were not selected.

Paper or CD copies of the Final General Management Plan/Wilderness Management Plan can be obtained at the park's headquarters in Bayfield or by contacting the park's Chief of Planning and Resource Management, Julie Van Stappen at 715-779-3398, extension 102, or at jvanstappen@nps.gov. Copies can also be downloaded from the park's website after May 13 at www.nps.gov/apis/gmp.htm. Display copies will also be available at the Bayfield, Washburn, and Ashland libraries.

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